

# Spiritual Visionary Leadership

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# 1 Discipleship

## ***No spiritual leadership without discipleship.***

### 1.1 'What is a disciple?'

The word 'disciple' means: 'pupil', or 'follower'.

*A few characteristics:*

- 1 Someone who openly shows that he wants to be a follower of Christ, who witnesses about what has happened to him.
- 2 Someone who feeds himself with, and who has knowledge of, God's word.
- 3 Someone who by prayer (and word) maintains his relationship with God.
- 4 Someone who allows God to change his mind, who is open to God's Spirit (John 3:30).
- 5 Someone who does not only believe but who is also obedient. Someone who recognizes and overcomes sin.
- 6 Someone who lives in spiritual fellowship with other Christians.
- 7 Someone who is focused on developing his gifts.
- 8 Someone who forgives and who asks for forgiveness, who is willing to be corrected.
- 9 Someone who is seeking God's will.
- 10 Someone who wants to commit himself for God's Kingdom and who has multiplication as his objective.

**1** *How many Christians in The Netherlands are indeed a disciple do you think?*

### 1.2 Discipleship is a choice

You do not become a disciple automatically. It is a choice of your whole heart. The choice also has consequences which have to be considered and accepted prior to making the choice.

**2** *Have you made the choice yet, or do you want to make it?*

**3** *Did you reflect upon the ten points of paragraph 1.1 and are you willing to do it?*

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said: "Here am I. Send me!"*

**Isaiah 6:8**

The consequences:

*Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.*

**Luke 9:23, 24**

**4** *Did you consider the consequences?*

*Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?*

*For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'*

*"Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.*

*"Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

**Luke 14:28-35**

### 1.3 Conditions for discipleship

In general, a disciple for God is:

<i>Accessible</i>	Attitude of a pupil, willing to listen.
<i>Available</i>	Commitment (choice), selfless serving
<i>Useful</i>	Skills

### 1.4 Accessible

#### 1.4.1 Living based on forgiveness

##### Receiving forgiveness from God

A disciple has received forgiveness (upon repentance) for sins from the past. He/she is quick to ask God for forgiveness for any new sins when they occur.

*for though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity.*

**Proverbs 24:16**

*Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.*

**Psalms 32:2-3**

##### Forgiving others

A disciple forgives what others do to him. This begins by the willingness to hear a confession of sin.

*[But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your sins.]*

**Mark 11:26**

There are a number of reasons to forgive.

##### The psychological effect

A bitter and angry attitude to others makes you an angry and bitter person. You will be stuck in your own hatred. It hurts you more than it does the other person.

*Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.*

**Proverbs 10:12**

*A malicious man disguises himself with his lips, but in his heart he harbours deceit. His malice may be concealed by deception, but his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.*

**Proverbs 26:24, 26**

##### The effect on relationships

Do not burn your bridges behind you by breaking definitively with people. Who had ever thought that the violent Saul would ever be the Paul who preached love and forgiveness. Hatred writes people off. Love entertains hope.

##### The spiritual effect

*For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

**Matthew 6:14-15**

When you are unwilling to forgive others, it limits relationships, both the ones with God as well as the ones with people.

### Receiving forgiveness from others

A disciple asks forgiveness when he hurts others. There is rarely forgiveness unless forgiveness is asked for.

*"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

**Matthew 5:22-24**

It is all about asking for forgiveness when it is necessary to restore relationships and/or to keep them good.

### Asking forgiveness:

Acknowledge and mention by name what is wrong\* in your life/behaviour

Ask for forgiveness

If possible, restore the consequences of your 'mistake'.

\*) contrary to God's will, sin

## **1.4.2 Teachable attitude and willingness to learn, to be formed, to change**

*The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back.*

**Isaiah 50:4-5**

*"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.*

*If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;*

**Isaiah 1:18-19**

*Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.*

**Psalms 25:4-5**

## 1.5 Available

Availability for God is expressed in your willingness to make your time, your attention, and your whole life available to God, i.e. your willingness to deny yourself.

*Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?*

**Luke 9:23-25**

**5** What does it mean 'to take up your cross'? Luke 9:23-24

**6** What does it mean here 'to lose your life' and 'to save your life'?

**7** What do you imagine is the meaning of 'following Jesus'?

*Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:*

*If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

**Luke 14:25-27**

## 1.6 Useful

The usefulness of a disciple is mainly determined by his relationship with God, his faith, dependence on Him and continued growth. Below we will deal with a number of aspects related to this:

Believing and doing, obedience

Taking steps in faith.

Receiving and developing.

Faith and diligence.

Perseverance and endurance.

No conformity with the world.

Witnessing by means of your way of life.

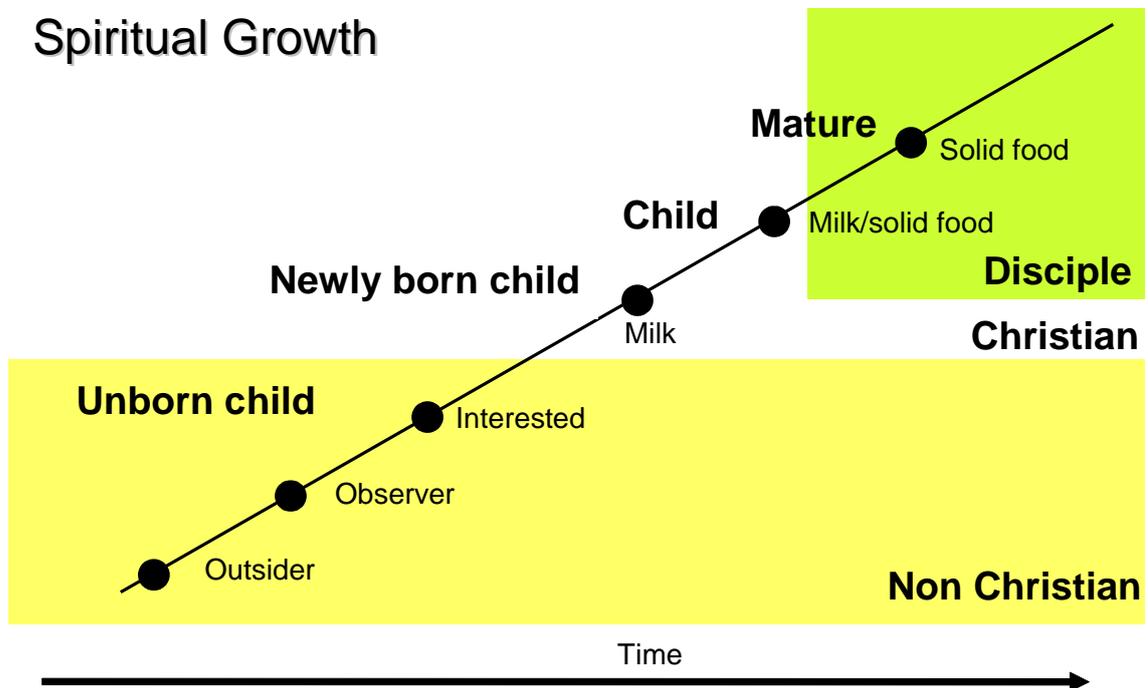
Witnessing by your reply to questions on being a Christian.

Witnessing by not hiding yourself, nor the fact that you are a Christian.

Strong relationships with other Christians.

## 2 Spiritual growth

Regarding his growth, a disciple is a somewhat older child, in the midst of growing up, step by step increasing in knowledge, trust in God, being obedient, more and more aware of God's love and experiencing His blessing.



***Discipleship is a (development) process, it is not a programme***

For an explanation see the material with 'Course Day 2'.

Spiritual growth rests on three main concepts:

- Sit
- Walk and
- Stand

These concepts were derived from the book "Sit, Walk, Stand" by Watchman Nee and they will be discussed below.

## 2.1 Sit

### 2.1.1 What determines your feeling of security (wellness)?

In general we enjoy receiving confirmation or recognition as a fundamental aspect for determining your feeling of security. Confirmation by people is nice. Yet, it is not really necessary to have a rich life, or to feel well.

### 2.1.2 Do you know what you have had for a long time?

Read Ephesians 1:1 - 3:21.

In the introduction of the epistle to the Ephesians we are invited to sit down and to rejoice about what He accomplished, about what we have had for a long time, how richly God has blessed us in fact with spiritual blessings and how He has reserved an inheritance for us in the heavenly places. And why?

We have to do something with these enormous riches, to show them and do good works which He prepared for us in advance. This does not mean that everything that we hear about is also predestined for us to actually do. What should we do and what should not we do? How can we see if something is our assignment or not? In order to receive an answer to this, we need prayer, listening to God, but also talks with others. We have to be alert in responding to signals. Sit down for this! It is an absolute must to sit down. If you did not sit down first, and entered into God's rest, you cannot live in peace. If we walk or stand, our legs carry the whole weight of our body. When we sit down, our weight is carried by something outside of us. Going on in our own strength is to resist His deliverance (e.g. the drowning man who resists the person coming to rescue him).

In this context, sitting means always that God communicates to you (and not vice versa); that He loves you very much. He does not love you for what you do. He loves you for who you are in Christ and for what He wants to make of you. Clean up your relationship with Him. Get rid of everything that stands in the way of a pure relationship.

### 2.1.3 Believing and doing

*What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?*

*Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

*But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.*

*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?*

*Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.*

**James 2:14-22**

**8** *When are faith and deeds balanced?*

*And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

**Hebrews 11:6**

### 2.1.4 Taking steps in faith.

Peter took a step in faith when he placed his foot on the water. God gives promises and challenges and expects a response/action from us.

*"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said: ... Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.*

*But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"*

**Matthew 14:28-31**

**9** Give an example of a situation in which you took a step of faith or want to take a step of faith.

The reality is that we do not have spectacular experiences with God every day: Life also consists of the usual everyday things; the things that God also asks of us, such as simply doing our job faithfully and being there for other people. We have to do what is daily and natural out of faith sometimes so God can do the supernatural.

### 2.1.5 Receiving and developing

*"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' "The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. " 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

**Mattheüs 25:14-30**

**10** What does the preceding part tell us about our responsibility?

**11** What does God expect of us?

**12** *Which limitations can you experience to assume your responsibility?*

**13** *Which available elements support taking responsibility?*

**14** *Which role does your image of God play in all this?*

**15** *What did God give you? Make a list of talents.*

**16** *How are you making use of your talents?*

**17** *Do you have to develop all of your talents or is it good enough if you merely develop a part of them?*

## 2.2 Walk

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the word 'walk' is mentioned eight times. Walking means 'to behave'. The test is in mutual relationships, relations between:

- Fellow Christians
- Husband/Wife
- Parents/Children
- Employers/Employees

### Read Ephesians 4 : 1 – 16

About the unity and diversity in the church. Does this only apply to the church? It also applies to one's whole life! Even to our work. Even in a secular business or a secular organisation. Yet, this causes tension, struggle. We have to be able to explain our behaviour, particularly to God.

### Read Ephesians 4 : 17 through 5 : 21.

It concerns the behaviour of the believers (individually), the new lifestyle. We have to make effective choices. If we compare our behaviour in our life, or work organisation (yes, even the organisation itself) with this part of scripture, it may give us a shock! What a difference! That is why we have to absorb its meaning so it can carry us through all processes in which we find ourselves. However, we have to be willing and know that God works in us to will and to act according to His grace!

### Read Ephesians 5 : 22 – 33

This section relates to marriage. This part discusses the relationship between husband and wife, but also between Christ and His church, is hard to digest in our times. We fairly quickly want to distance ourselves from it, to slightly modify it. Yet resistance to something that God orders us to do is rebellion. On the other hand, we should not apply these verses as a cold and hard dogma but realise that love is the primary motive that will not erode the truth. If God points out the direction then He will also provide the details. He will not only point out the way ahead, He will also accompany us and send us.

### Read Ephesians 6 : 1 – 9

This relates to behaviour in the relationships between parents/children and employers/employees.

In all this, the principles of Hebrews 12 apply: Throwing off everything that hinders and the sins and to run with perseverance the race marked out for us, having fixed our eyes only on Jesus Christ.

### 2.2.1 No conformity with the world.

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

**Romans 12:1**

**24** *In which ways can you conform to the world?*

Not conforming to the mentality of the 'the world' requires our constant attention. . . .

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

**2 Timothy 2:15**

**25** *In which points do you find it difficult to resist the mentality of 'the world'?*

## 2.2.2 Witnessing

### Witnessing by means of your way of life.

*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

**Colossians 4:2-6**

*Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

**1 Peter 2:12**

**26** *Do people around you connect your behaviour or lifestyle with you being a Christian? How?*

### Witnessing by your response to questions on being a Christian.

*"Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.*

### The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

*They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" Then they*

asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

**John 9:7-34**

**27** Which questions did the beggar have to answer?

**28** What did the beggar say?

**29** Does he emphasize:

Bringing the gospel?

Jesus?

His healing?

The facts?

Something else?

**30** In what way is the response of the parents different from their son's response?

**31** How does the beggar respond when he is questioned once again?

**32** Is he afraid?

**33** To what extent does the beggar know God?

Testifying by not hiding yourself, nor by hiding the fact that you are a Christian.

*"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.*

*In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."*

**Matthew 5:14-16**

**34** Mention a number of ways in which you can hide that you are a Christian.

*How were people around you able to see in the past week (weeks) that you are a Christian?*

Fear (core emotion) is a frequent hindrance to testify. It is a hindrance in all relationships. See also: "Strong relationships with other Christians."

### 2.2.3 Strong relationships with other Christians

The relationships with other Christians may be an enormous support and stimulation for further development. It is exactly what God wants:

*A body with close mutual relationships in which his Spirit may live.*

The quality of relationships among Christians determines how the body of Christ functions. The mutual love, the level of communication and the degree of openness determine the quality. Some important elements are, among other things:

- Listening, taking time for each other / Sharing aspects of your life
- Correct / admonish
- Help / counsel
- Comfort / Pray together / Encourage / Stimulate

*Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**Hebrews 10:24-25**

#### **Positive influences:**

##### Openness, transparency

*If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

**1 John 1:6-8**

##### Mutual reliability

*And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.*

**Matthew 5:36,37**

##### Admonition

When you see a need with someone, it may be love to say something about it. Yet, it may also be love to not say anything.

The difference? Having insight in his or her possibilities to do something with what you say. If there are no possibilities then you only needlessly put a strain on someone.

So this gives us a certain responsibility. If we do not accept this responsibility then we easily become know-it-alls or accusers.

**Negative influences:**

Fear (core emotion) may provide a substantial hindrance for a good, healthy relationship:

Being afraid of disturbance in the relationship (conflict, quarrel).  
*A good relationship is able to withstand trouble. Cherish positive expectations.*

Being afraid to suffer loss (costs much, without benefit)  
*Self-serving, no compliment for the other party.*

Being afraid to be rejected.  
*Withdrawal (core strategy), taking no initiative, leading to loneliness.*

*There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*

*We love because he first loved us.*

*If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.*

*And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

**1 John 4:18-21**

The full conviction of God's love, faithfulness and care is the basis for overcoming fear and the hotbed for healthy relationships.

**36** *Which of the above-mentioned (or other) positive and/or negative influences do you recognize in your relationships with other Christians?*

**37** *God went all the way to restore His relationship with man. How far will you go? (We should not compare ourselves to God, but what is a good relationship worth to us?)*

## 2.3 Stand

Read: Ephesians 6: 10 – 20.

First we must sit if we want to walk. Being in Christ. Learning everything of Him. Knowing what we possess in Him. Only after that we can walk and act. We must stand by employing the spiritual armour.

- The loins girded with truth
- The breastplate of righteousness
- Feet shod with the willingness of the gospel of peace
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of the spirit (Word of God).

For this battle we must understand in what kind of fight we are involved. It is not about us.

### **Be on the alert for the enemy**

Everything that God wants, His great enemy, the Devil, tries to prevent. Everything he does is an attempt to draw us away from God. Chinks in our armour are seen by the enemy and used to his advantage.

This is the real fight in which we are involved. That is why even in our fight our objectives must be pure. It is all about Him and about His honour. Since we are involved in this battle, we should not just get going ourselves. First, we must equip ourselves with all the He gives us. The spiritual armour!

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*

**Ephesians 6:18**

*For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.*

**2 Chronicles 16:9**

*No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

**1 Corinthians 10:13**

### **2.3.1 Dependence and commitment**

'Dependence' here means: Living in God's power (not in your own strength) Israel did not depend on God but they acted in their own strength.

*This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. You said, 'No, we will flee on horses.' Therefore you will flee! You said, 'We will ride off on swift horses.' Therefore your pursuers will be swift!*

**Isaiah 30:15,16**

David had a totally different approach . . .

*Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*

**Psalms 5:3-4**

Moses:

*Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people." The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.*

**Exodus 33:12-15**

**58** What are the factors hindering dependence?

### **Commitment**

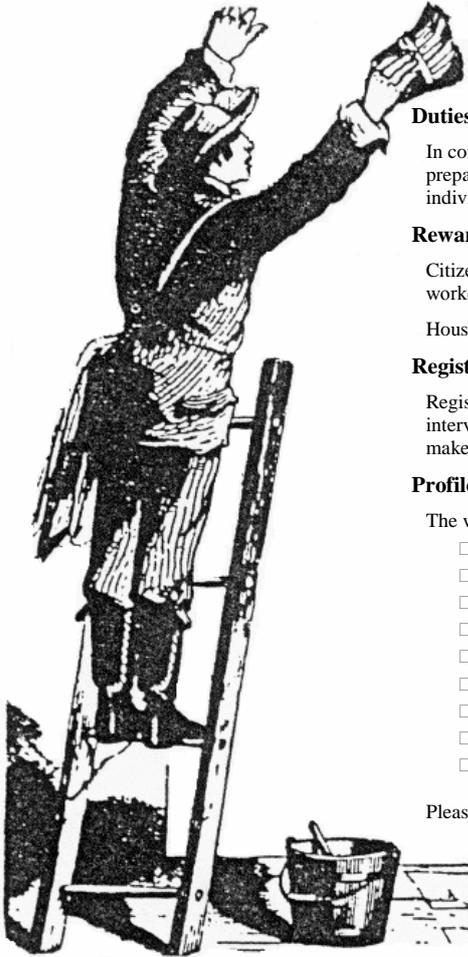
Paul:

*But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

**Philippians 3:7,8**

The meaning of 'commitment' according to the dictionary is: Giving, dedicate to, diligence (Koene/Prisma). Commitment to God means to dedicate yourself to Him entirely, to diligently dedicate your life to Him. Commitment in dependence: giving yourself to God, not in your own strength.

Announcement  
**THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**  
 Wants to employ an unlimited number of people in the position of  
**WORKER (male/female)**



**Duties:**

In complete loyalty to the King, announce the pending establishment of the Kingdom and prepare the way. This full-time position is carried out as a team effort as well as on an individual basis, giving all creative freedom to the worker.

**Reward:**

Citizenship of the Kingdom; comfort, inheriting the earth, satisfaction, mercy, seeing God. The workers shall receive the title "children of God".

Housing will be provided.

**Registration:**

Registration is effected by means of a statement of commitment expressed in a personal interview with the King who holds a permanent session for this purpose. It is not necessary to make an appointment prior to the interview.

**Profile:**

The worker

- is poor for the benefit of the Spirit
- mourns
- is meek
- hungers and thirsts for righteousness
- is merciful
- is pure in heart
- is a peacemaker
- is persecuted for righteousness' sake
- suffers scorn, persecution and slander for the King's sake.

Please Note: The willingness to receive further training and teaching is sufficient.

**2.3.2 Faith and diligence.**

We have received many things from God. . .

*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.*

**2 Peter 1:3-7**

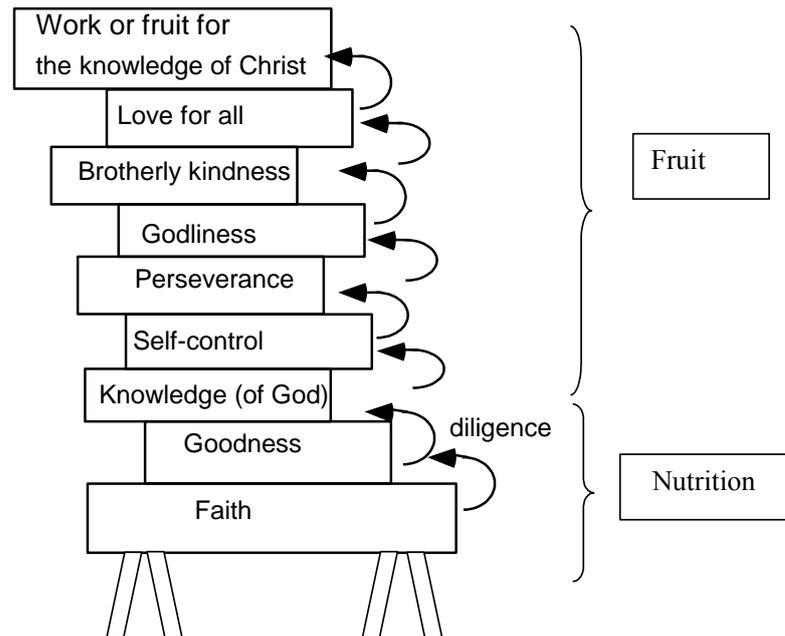
**18** Describe what "everything" (first line) could entail

**19** How did He do it?

20 Why are faith and zeal required.

**Working and believing is believing that it works!**

21 The one support the other. So what is most essential.



*make every effort to add to your faith goodness. . .*

### 2.3.3 Perseverance and endurance

#### Anchored

*Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.*

*You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."*

**Hebrews 10:32-38**

22 Out of your own experience, do you know situations of scorn and persecution?

A disciple has a clear goal that helps him to persevere:

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

**Hebrews 12:1-3**

The non-Christians often critically look at Christians due to the fact that they have communicated that in the area of lifestyle they think they know it all.

**23** *What does this mean for your attitude to non-Christians?*

See also 'De Insider' (Chapter 8, p. 116: Circle anti-clockwise, clockwise, spiritual battle).

*But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.*

**1 Corinthians 15:57,58**

### 3 Bearing fruit, becoming more Christ-like

Bearing fruit is possible in two ways:

1. Develop more characteristics of God in you by what He teaches us, through His word, His guidance in our daily lives, His Spirit and through fellow-Christians.

Examples of areas of growth:

Love	Honesty
Humility	Openness
Purity	

2. Bearing fruit for the benefit of others (evangelism, spiritual parenthood, friendship, development, practical help).

#### 3.1 Being successful or bearing fruit?

In everyday practice, we are often confronted with the concept of 'success'. We want to be successful. It provides some security and recognition. The opposite is rejection. Rejection creates uncertainty. Fear. We do not want that.

With us, success is always linked to our achievements. It is aimed at people. It is temporary.

What causes thinking in terms of "success"? It proceeds from the notion that security can be made, that we will control everything, that we are no longer dependent. We are poorly trained in dependence. We do not learn it anymore.

How do I gain confirmation and recognition? By making security. In this context, man, or I, is at the centre. We fight for it. That results in stress.

In the Bible the word 'success' in our meaning does not occur.

Jesus had the attitude of a pupil. He took the time to listen and to ask of his Father. (Isaiah 50:4, John 5:19, Mark 1:35-36). Deliberately, Jesus did not meet people's expectations, since He did not want to do anything beyond the will of his Father. He took the time to listen to God prior to speaking. And yet, there was so much to do! There was a world full of trouble in need of help and healing. He did not let his life be dictated by the need, but by the will of his Father.

As disciples of Jesus we may only bear 100% fruit if we first listen to Him. Our concept of fruit may differ from God's.

Sometimes we confuse bearing fruit with being successful. Yet there are major differences between being successful and bearing fruit. Jesus does not tell his disciples to be successful; He tells them to bear fruit.

In this context, please read the article of drs. W.G. Rietkerk: "Being successful or bearing fruit?"

*With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfil every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**2 Thessalonians 1:11,12**

A number of differences between having success and bearing fruit are listed below:

<b>Being successful</b>	<b>Bearing fruit</b>
Self-centred	Aimed at others
Requires an effort and abilities	Requires primarily faith and commitment.
Depending on circumstances	Depending on God
Depending on one's own strength	Based on God's power and work.
Yourself or society as a source.	God as a source.
Honour of people.	Honour of God.
Points to yourself.	Points to God.
Successful: You are full of success.	Fruitful: Bearing fruit, producing something.

### Fruit

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

**John 15:16**

See also Galatians 5:22

### Success

*And he told them this parable: The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '*

*"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'*

*"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."*

**Luke 12:16-21**

*They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel —because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.*

**Genesis 11:3-9**

**38** What is your main purpose in life: bearing fruit or being successful?

## 3.2 Bearing fruit

### **“Apart from me you can do nothing”**

John 15:1–8. This part of the Bible shows a part of the last conversations between the Lord Jesus and His disciples just before He was crucified. Just before our death, we would think: “What should I still share with my children?” A type of soldier’s manual with directives. “Do this, or do not do that”. We like to be able to measure our work according to a certain standard. Jesus does not do that here! He only has one message: “abide in Me”. This means ‘to be in Christ’—in that position.

### **Being in Christ; sit**

So, sit and subsequently, remaining in Him; walking and standing. It is not a tremendous battle to produce fruit. The fruit cannot be produced by us. Bearing fruit is an inseparable aspect of remaining in Him. So we just have to do our daily work where He has placed us, walk with Him and then there will be fruit.

Success is not always the opposite of bearing fruit. Success is positive when there is fruit at the same time. Everything that did not come about in Christ and that, therefore, does not bear fruit, has no value and will be burnt (1 Corinthians 3:13-15). So we have to see clearly that it concerns His Kingdom and not ourselves.

It is important that we are at peace with our position in society in relation to God. It may happen that we have to do something for our employer/patron which he wants to do with the wrong intentions (for example: reorganisation and dismissal of personnel only for the sake of achieving a higher profit). It is all about how we do the work, and how we handle it (or even avoid doing it!). Business result is not the same as gathering success. Success is always linked to what I achieve.

### **Do you really believe that?**

However, one of the main characteristics of fruit is: die first and then start to grow. The deepest question that God puts before us is: “Do you really believe that you will be bearing fruit if you remain in Me?”.

Believe, that if we remain in Him, He is always present and He will do it. In life and death. Even beyond death.

### **Value of fruit**

We have no control over the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Lord works the fruit from a distance.

In the fruit it is no longer I who is at the centre, but other people (and particularly God). The fruit endures and remains for ever. It has eternal value. Fruit can only be produced if we surrender our own self wholly and completely. If we remain in Him.

*I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.*

*The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

**John 12:24,25**

**3.3 Being Christ-like Love**

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

**John 13:34,35**

*This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,*

**1 John 5:2,3**

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. We love because he first loved us.*

**1 John 4:10,11,19**

**39** *What is a motive for you to love?*

**40** *What characterizes the love as God sees it?*

Love is being there for the other person and for his/her development, among other things by:

- Serving
- Encouraging
- Giving
- Patience
- Showing respect
- Forgiving
- Protecting
- ...

The abovementioned aspects belong to Jesus' character. This is how He treated people.

**41** *Which other forms of love can you mention?*

Below a number of aspects of love will be dealt with in greater detail.

Respect

*then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

**Philippians 2:2-4**

Respect is expressed by trying to understand others, by recognizing their strong points and by responding to it. Particularly in dealing with Christians who happen to have a somewhat different opinion or different principles in certain areas than you, who have a different church background or church culture, this attitude may be quite valuable.

Respect may be expressed by 'taking someone's interests into consideration' and 'taking someone seriously'.

The (Dutch) dictionary (Koene) mentions: esteem, respect, regard, honour, being considerate of.

**42** *Which other forms of showing respect do you know?*

Patience, meekness (controlled power)

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

**Colossians 3:12-14**

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*

**Matthew 5:5**

Oriented towards the other person

. . .love does no harm to its neighbour

**Romans 13:10**

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

**1 Corinthians 13:4,5**

. . .showing interest:

- What is the other person doing?
- What does he or she need?

In short, questions that have something to do with concern, an expression of love.

. . . not speaking evil:

*Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

**1 Corinthians 13:6,7**

. . .not gossiping:

Not communicating lies.

Not unnecessarily communicate someone's shortcomings (bad character traits or deeds).

Do not promote a false image of someone else.

Not communicating any half-truths about someone.

You are not completely certain of the facts and add your own (negative colouring).

***Half truths often turn into complete lies.***

A serving attitude

*Jesus called them together and said,. "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you.*

*Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man*

*did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

**Mark 10:42-45**

*For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*

**2 Corinthians 4:5**

**43** *How might you serve your co-workers/colleagues in the coming week? Or your family members?*

### 3.4 Giving

#### Giving to God:

*Honour the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

**Proverbs 3:9,10**

*Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

*Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever"*

*Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.*

**2 Corinthians 9:6-12**

- 44** What can you donate to God? Aside from money, mention a couple of other examples.

#### Giving to people:

*They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.*

**2 Corinthians 8:4,5**

- 45** How can you give yourself to people?

#### Loving others as yourself

*Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'*

*All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

**Matthew 22:37-40**

Loving yourself: do not be a doormat, know your limits and your values.

- 46** What is the difference between loving yourself and egoism?

You can only truly give with your heart if you know how to receive.

Jesus wanted to wash the feet of the disciples. It was a test to see whether they were able to receive.

*so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.*

*After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*

*He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, **are you going to wash my feet?**"*

*Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

*"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."*

*Jesus answered, "**Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.**"*

*"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"*

*Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."*

*For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.*

*When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.*

*"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.*

***Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.***

*I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.*

*I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.*

*Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

**John 13:4-17**

### 3.5 Being honest

Honesty prevents that others are disappointed in you (expectations) and prevents guilt and a bad conscience.

**47** *Are you able to link honesty with making promises, being able to say 'no' and keeping promises?*

*Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another.*

**Leviticus 19:11**

*So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.*

**Acts 24:16**

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

**Matthew 5:6**

**48** *Can you mention other advantages of being honest?*

### 3.6 Pure and fresh

*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.*

**Ephesians 5:3**

*It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God;*

**1 Thessalonians 4:3-5**

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

**Matthew 5:8**

*"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

*If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.*

**Matthew 5:28-29**

The word 'purity' is used in the Bible to refer to a pure, unpolluted mind. It mostly concerns sexuality. Yet it may also refer to greed and selfishness.

**49** *Why is purity important?*

**50** *How do you take care of a pure mind?*

### 3.7 Openness

Openness is an attitude. It does not mean that you just blurt out anything that comes to mind. Everyone has a responsibility to be considerate of the feelings of others. E.g.

*Say what you know, but know what you say.*

Not everyone will be able to properly appreciate your openness and to deal with it in a correct way. Openness has much to do with telling others how you feel, honesty and a willingness to listen to what others want to say to you (opinions, advice, constructive criticism).

**51** *To what extent are you open to others?*

**52** *Where are your limits?*

### 3.8 Humility

Humility is based on a realistic self-image. It has to do with forgiving yourself.

*This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.*

*Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.*

**1 John 3:19-22**

If you do not forgive yourself, you will continue to play hide and seek and by your attitude you will keep hiding the truth (core emotion fear). For this a realistic self-image is required as well as a correct view of God and His will. It means that you are able to distinguish between what He finds truly important and what results from human thought. It also helps to have insight in others. (Comfort, recognition, you are no exception). Others are no better than you. So you may heal them with what bothers you. (Assuming that they adopt the same approach as you do).

*He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

**Proverbs 28:13**

Thesis:

*Humility is not the same as grovelling. It means that you acknowledge your imperfection and your tendency to sin, but also your gifts and virtues.*

**53** *Do you dare to mention your strong points and talents without blushing? Which?*

**54** *Are there things you feel a little bit ashamed about?*

**55** *Are you willing (if it should be necessary) to acknowledge your weaknesses, and to mention them by name? (Not to everyone, but only to trusted persons).*

**56** *According to you is there a clear difference between true guilt and a (false) feeling of guilt?*

It is only a case of true guilt (sin) if your feeling of guilt originates from a sense of guilt. It means that you are aware that you have broken one of God's commandments. Humility and openness are the consequence of God's work in you in response to your willingness.

The willingness starts with a choice, the principle of which is mentioned in John:

*I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.  
The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

**John 12:24-25**

**57** *Which examples could you mention in relation to loving and hating your life in this world?*

## 4 Creating a margin

Overload is the result if you want to achieve too much. You can do something about it. But can you do something about everything coming at you that you did not choose yourself and that you cannot control? Yes, you can also do something about that. You can prepare for eventualities, create reserves: observing margins. A margin is the space between what we can handle and what we must do.

It means that you do not completely fill your agenda, that you constantly commit 100% of your energy, that you immediately spend what comes in, etc.

*“This problem of overload and a lack of reserve is more . . . The purpose for which we live is at risk to be lost! Most people go constantly running through life, without knowing exactly where they are going.”*

**Jim Petersen, from ‘De Insider’**

Overload is the greatest problem with the functioning of a leader. It is necessary to create margins in order to be able to adequately respond to all kinds of situations.

It is all about additional room between what we must and want to do and our ability to carry out all of it.

*“We as Christians, have to simplify our lives. Otherwise, we run the risk of missing out on the unsurpassed treasures of the world and the eternity. Our modern civilization is so complex – it almost makes a dedicated relationship with God impossible.*

**A.W. Tozer**

If there are no margins, what you give may exceed that what you receive and/or need. Then there will be more going out of your life than what comes in. If you keep up this process long enough, it eventually results in destruction, burn-out and disease.

### **How do you determine where the margins are needed?**

How do you determine the space between what we can handle and what we must do. Do you feel that you are doing too much? We may be busy, but are we really doing too much? Perhaps we do the wrong things. Or perhaps we do the right things in the wrong way. What determines what I do?

We must dare to make a diagnosis of what we are actually doing. When we do things, are we doing them for God’s glory or for the Kingdom? Or, are we doing them to serve our own interests, e.g. to make a living? Of all the things we do, what is good and what is not from God’s perspective? The answer to that is essential.

### **How can you make space?**

See your life within the perspective of eternity (see 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:10) and apply the consequences for your life’s vision. The vision on family, business, on everything, has to match this.

In the book “De Insider” we read: “Everyone of us is called to have a living relationship with Christ. If we involve Him in our work then He will involve us in His work.”

### **Guard your space together**

Having a relationship is vital. First you need to have a relationship with Christ, but also with one another. You need one another. Seek the feedback of others. Draw information from your relations. And create space. It is not so much that we must make time available for one another, but that we create space to give true attention. In doing this we must constantly ask ourselves the question: “How is our relationship? Am I giving true attention? And we should dare to ask the same questions to others within that relationship. Dare to make a diagnosis. Dare to act. Dare to get a handle on what must be changed. Creating space is a process. You have to fight to create space. Guard your space together. It is

important to have people around you (loved ones, best friends, colleagues) who correct you. Who guard the limits together with you.

**Learn to enjoy quietness**

Learn to enjoy the quietness of peace with God. Enjoy the things that God provides. We may thank Him, for Christ's victory, for all that He gives us.

## 5 Multiplication Evangelism

What does God want for the non-Christians?

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

**2 Peter 3:9**

*In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.*

**Matthew 18:14**

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

**John 15:16**

*I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'*

**Acts 26:17-18**

**59** What does each verse mean to you personally?

What is the problem?

*As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.*

**Romans 3:10-11**

**60** Do you recognize this in your daily environment? Please provide a few examples.

*When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

*Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."*

**Matthew 9:36-38**

**61** What different kinds of workers are needed, do you think?

**62** What kind of a worker are you?

*"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.*

*Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.*

*I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour."*

**John 4:34-38**

**5.1 With God's help, assisting people in becoming a child of God**

God's share

*Yet there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him.*

**John 6:64**

He knows who know Him and who do not. Therefore, we need His guidance in evangelism.

*"Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered.*

*"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.*

**John 6:43-45**

What is our share?

*The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.*

**John 5:15**

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

**1 Peter 3:15**

*Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." [It is a deserted road, (transl.)] So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet.*

*The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."*

**Acts 8:27-29**

*Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.*

**Romans 10:1**

**63** *Is our share more than witnessing and giving account? If so, what and why?*

What should we do now?: . . . . . Praying, being available, paying attention and possibly speaking

Nobody is saved due to your effort. Maybe they are saved partly due to your availability.

*But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:*

**John 16:7,8**

The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and righteousness. All we do is to witness. However, this does not mean that we should be passive. God asks of Christians to be willing to learn to be more competent in bringing the gospel.

Being available may entail that you are willing when God wants to use you. Yet, it may also entail that you give your time and attention to non-Christians so they can see many aspects of your life. This may create an environment in which there are opportunities for them to ask you some questions and in which they receive certain answers by seeing the practice of your daily life.

**64** *Are there any non-Christians that you share your life with, with whom you have a friendship relationship?*

The more you share your life with someone, the more opportunities you have to share something of the gospel. Particularly if you give yourself more to someone else.

**65** *To what extent are you willing to invest in people, irrespective of the result?*

**5.2 Sound knowledge of the gospel**

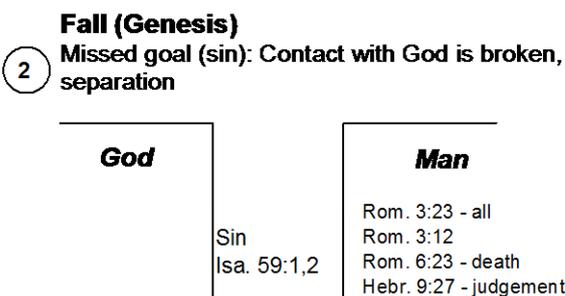
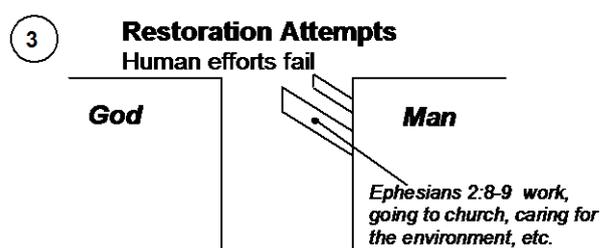
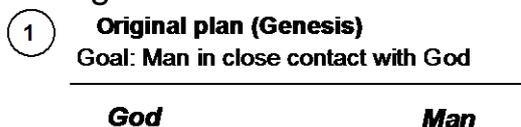
*What motivates someone to become a Christian?*

- If you do not choose for Jesus, you will be lost. (I feel that people who want to convert me put themselves above me, as if they are better).
- There is someone who loves you, who wants to restore everything in your life that needs to be restored.
- Perhaps both motivations?

**66** *How would you explain the gospel?*

**A number of possibilities:**

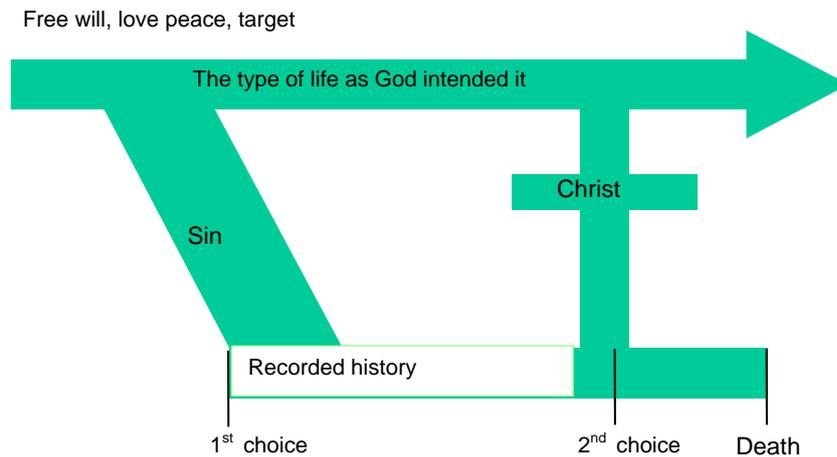
De Bridge illustration



*By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

**1 Corinthians 3:10-11**

## Two Ways Illustration



1. The recorded history provides an image of war, tension, fight, cruelty and inhumanity. As far as we know it has always been like this. No improvement can be detected and there is no reason to assume that there will be any improvement.
2. Some people argue that 'If God created a world such as this and a life such as this then He must be cruel or the Devil'.
3. Yet the Bible shows that God created man for a quite different type of life. A life that is characterized by: love, peace, joy, care for others, absence of cruelty and the absence of effort and fighting.
4. Yet, God did not create man as a robot. He wanted people who were like Him, with which He could have communion. For this purpose, He had to give man a free will, so he could love God based on free will. So mankind was not forced to live as history and the current news depict. Mankind has chosen to live in a way that deviates from what God intended at creation.
5. There is only one solution: 'The suffering and death of Christ, in order to redeem the moral guilt of mankind.' There is one way back: via 'the cross' (1 Peter 3:18, 2 Corinthians 5:17).

### 5.3 Aimed at bringing people in touch with Christ.

67 *How much contact do you have with non-Christians?*

68 *Do you know what keeps them busy? What?*

69 *Which norms and values does the other use?*

70 *Which are his/her main questions?*

71 *Does he live unconsciously or consciously?*

**72** *Is the other person enslaved to something?*

By listening and attempting to understand how someone thinks and lives you may attempt to find an answer to these questions.

## 5.4 Insight in background and cultural differences

Background and culture relate for example to the following areas:

Church: non/Evangelistic/Calvinistic/Catholic/etc.

Origin: Dutch/Moroccan/Turkish/Surinam/etc.

### Church

Particularly with people with a more non-practising religious background, in their experience the church culture may dominate as opposed to the factual knowledge of the gospel and the Bible. Depending on someone's background, the gospel may evoke several reactions.

### Immigrant

This requires special insights, knowledge and an ability to adapt (see 'De Insider').

The question is how can you adapt the gospel to the world of life and thought of the other person.

### **Who has to adapt?**

It is unrealistic and does not demonstrate a love for people, to expect that the non-Christians should adapt to the Christians and that they should be interested in the Christian's worldview and lifestyle when they are approached with the gospel. Paul says the following about this:

*Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.*

*To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.*

*I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.*

**1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

**73** *How far are you willing to go to reach the outsiders?*

**74** *Can you go too far in that respect? (See 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)  
Where is the borderline of worldliness?*

## 6 Multiplication Spiritual parenthood

Multiplication is a growth in numbers. It relates to *quantity*. Yet, the growth in numbers does not happen by itself. It cannot occur without adults. This applies to physical development but also to spiritual development. That is why it is necessary that every Christian grows to be mature. And then we are talking about *quality*. Education, attention, nurture and care are needed both for physical as well as spiritual growth. The people who are able to supply this are the educators and the parents. Parents are taking care of all the areas of growth of their children.

There are also spiritual parents. Spiritual parents are people who assist someone when they become a Christian. They help young Christians to grow (adoptive parents or mentors).

In churches there are various people involved in education. People also receive attention. Yet, what is needed are parents, who will take care of all of these aspects and who bear the responsibility for the individuals. Parents! Parents feel responsible for areas of development as well as for the course of development of their children.

Spiritual parents take care of all areas of development of the young Christians. They do not automatically have to be the same as the physical parents or people by whom some came to Christ. Paul is an example of this.

*I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

**1 Corinthians 4:14-16**

### Other examples

Jethro and Moses  
Barnabas and Paul  
Paul and Titus

Samuel and Saul  
Barnabas and Mark

Samuel and David  
Paul and Timothy

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*

**Proverbs 27:17**

*“Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers”*

**1 Corinthians 4:15**

### **Spiritual parents in our own life.**

What did these people have in common?

- They believed in me
- They gave me an opportunity for growth
- They offered support and advice
- Contact took place in an informal setting.

## 6.1 Multiplication, God's idea

### Multiplication of creation

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

**Genesis 1:28**

### Spiritual multiplication

Jesus takes the same line as God the Father in Genesis 1:28:

*Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

**Matthew 28:18-20**

It says:

'teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you', which include this command itself. It means that this is an command for multiplication. It is a command within a command. Therefore it is a recurring command. The multiplication principle was not concocted by CBMC, but by God, the Creator. It is His idea. Growth in *quality* and *quantity* are inseparably linked (see Matthew 28:18-20, in Course Day 2, study materials). For multiplication we need spiritual growth and spiritual parents and educators. And where do spiritual parents come from? They are children who have grown up, disciples. They are the result of growth.

*For the birth and education of spiritual children it is necessary that Christians mature, that they grow to be parents, ...For what should we do if there are no parents to raise the children? Do babies have to raise babies? Or should kids raise other kids?*

**75** Are you a spiritual parent for someone?

**76** If not, would you want to be one?

*Spiritual parents mature by personal, continued growth and by the decision to be a 'parent'.*

Just as discipleship, spiritual parenthood starts with a choice that you make with God:

*I want to choose, by means of God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, to be a builder in the Kingdom of God and to help others help non-Christians to become Christians and to assist fellow Christians in their growth. (See 2 Timothy 2:2)*

## 6.2 The duties of a spiritual parent

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*

*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

**Galatians 6:9-10**

### A spiritual parent...

- Stimulates growth and change.
- Is a stimulating example.
- Helps you to more efficiently achieve your personal goals.
- Plays a role in your spiritual quest.
- Has influence reaching to following generations.

Spiritual parenthood begins in the home. The role of the grand parents is also quite important in this respect.

The ideal parent does not exist! Ten characteristics of an ideal parent are:

- Has 'something' you need.
- Is able to maintain relationships.
- Is willing to take a risk with you.
- Is respected by others.
- Has a network of sources available.
- Is already consulted by others.
- Can listen as well as provide effective advice.
- Has a balanced lifestyle.
- Has analytical abilities.
- Is interested in what you are interested in.

Perhaps you have some of the following aspects to offer:

Am I a spiritual parent to be?	What can I offer someone?
Patient	Experience
Has "something" valuable for the other person	Knowledge
Maintaining relationships	Access to...
Process oriented	Money
Willing to take risks	Tools
Example function	Friendship
Time available?	Time
	Yourself

What did Paul do?

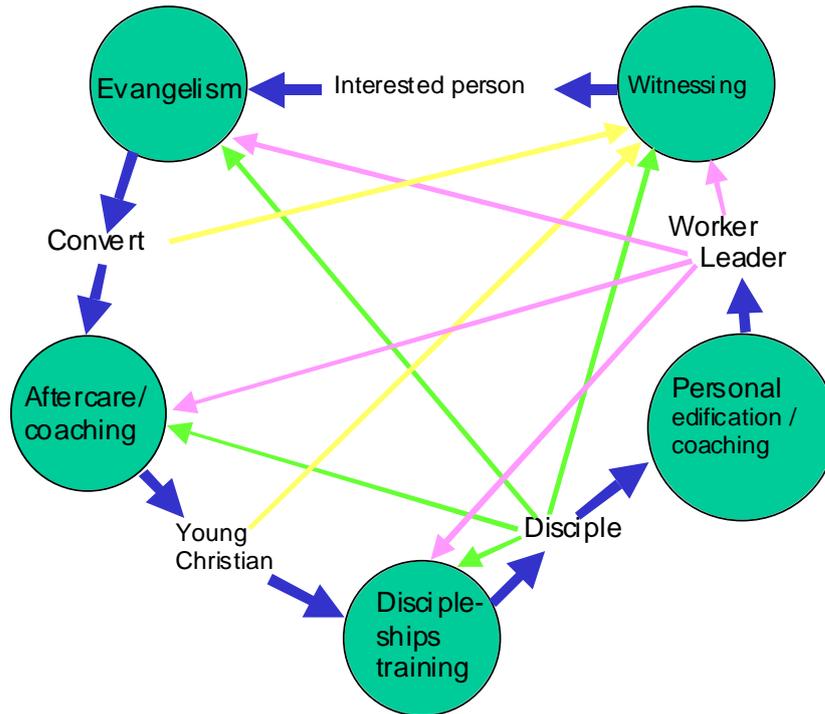
*You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.*

**2 Timothy 3:10-11**

Spiritual parents help people:

- To turn from being an outsider into an observer.
- To turn from being an observer into an interested person.
- To turn from being an interested person into a follower of Jesus Christ.
- To turn from being a follower into a disciple.

- To become a builder of the Kingdom.



The bold, circular arrows depict the development trajectory of a Christian. The diagonal arrows represent the involvement which a Christian may have in every stage of development within the various processes of others. It is all part of the category of planting and watering.

*I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.*

*So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.*

**2 Corinthians 3:6-9**

God gives the growth. Christians do not. Yet, we may contribute to favourable circumstances for such growth. An example from Paul's life is the care he had for Timothy:

Dedicated to the task of a spiritual parent

Prayer	1 Thessalonians 3:10,11
Thinking about	2 Thessalonians 1:2,3,
Taking initiative when needed	1 Thessalonians 3:1-3
Cherishing	2 Thessalonians 2:7-12

Listening to what God wants

Being a disciple	Isaiah 50:4
Asking for insight	James 1:5
Asking for God's will	Acts 22:10
Allow God's plans to have priority over your own plans and ideas	

Providing

Providing for nurture: Preparing activities, planning, organising	
Listening to what others have to say, to their experiences, their needs, etc.	
Thinking along	1 Thessalonians 2:12
Encouraging	1 Thessalonians 4:12

## Coaching

By Teaching, Exercising, Conveying

*Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

**Acts 8:30, 31**

### Teaching

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

**Matthew 28:19**

*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

**1 John 1:3**

Teaching entails providing information and helping people to understand it. This may be in the form of personal short discussions, in doing Bible study together, or in attending meetings.

Teaching also relates to providing advice in the field of biblical motives in taking decisions and making the right choices.

### Exercise

Providing the opportunity for exercise by looking for situations to exercise together, by taking part and by evaluation afterwards.

### Conveying

You may convey what you have, by doing everything together. In this way, you give the other person the opportunity to see how you do it. When he/she observes how you do it, this often has more of an effect than lengthy explanations.

This brings you into the area of 'sharing your life'. This may be anything: Eating together, leading a prayer group together, doing a job together, going fishing, praying, evangelising, sharing your own difficulties and the way in which you look for solutions with God's help.

What it is all about is that the other person can see and experience how 'the spiritual parent' does everything and how he or she responds in different situations.

### Structure of coaching

#### **Basis**

Is there a basis of understanding, trust and respect?

#### **Objective**

What do you want to achieve and why?

What can you achieve, what is realistic?

What is the time available to reach the goal?

#### **Motivation**

The why of the task, why the employee is considered to be suitable and how he benefits by it. Show trust and appreciation.

#### **Instruction/ Assignment**

Description of what must be done, how, with what, with whom and when. Delegate responsibilities and make them increase over time.

#### **Observation**

Quality of the execution, responses of others, of the person himself (verbal and non-verbal), perhaps any problem areas.

**Evaluation  
Coaching**

Compare the observations with your objective.  
Short discussion, emphasis on one or two essential aspects at the most, new or different partial assignment, coaching to give more attention to another area. Possibly, seek new options.

**Encouraging  
Final evaluation**

Emphasize the achieved progress.  
Coach and coached person discuss their experiences and lessons and possibly make new appointments in the same or in a new area.

**Areas of attention**

Personal learning objectives of the team members.

Estimate the potential qualities of the team members. See and evaluate the talents, gifts and strong points. This is a condition for a team member to accept leadership and it prevents defensive behaviour.

Coaching in practical situations.

Show the consequences of behaviour. Emphasize them. Allow the person in question to weigh the pros and cons of certain types of behaviour. Generate help options, alternatives.

Preparation

Ask yourself questions based on everyone's personal development plan (See material for Course Day 4).

- What do I want to achieve with my team member?
- How should I deal with the team member's resistance (See material for Course Day 6).
- Which discussion skills are required to reach my goal?
- When did I become a leader and when am I a coach?
- How can I steer behaviour? (See material for Course Day 6).